

**What is claimed and desired to be secured by Letters Patent is:**

1. A cold water dispersible, modified sago starch with gelling properties prepared by pregelatinizing a sago starch that has been converted to a viscosity of about 400 Brabender Units to about 1000 Brabender Units and inhibited, the converted, inhibited starch having a Brabender Viscosity Differential ("BVD"), measured between about 80° and about 90°C, of from about -35 BVD to about 25 BVD.
2. The modified sago starch of claim 1 wherein the sago starch is thermally inhibited.
3. The modified sago starch of claim 1 wherein the sago starch is inhibited by reacting the starch with at least 0.005% by weight of a crosslinking agent.
4. The modified sago starch of claim 3 wherein the sago starch is reacted with at least about 0.015% of a crosslinking agent.
5. The modified sago starch of claim 4 wherein the sago starch is reacted with about 0.015% to about 0.030% of a crosslinking agent.
6. The modified sago starch of claim 3 wherein the sago starch is reacted with a crosslinking agent selected from the group consisting of phosphorus oxychloride, epichlorohydrin, sodium trimetaphosphate and adipic-acetic anhydride.
7. The modified sago starch of claim 6 wherein the crosslinking agent is phosphorus oxychloride.
8. The modified sago starch of claim 1 wherein the starch is capable of forming a gel having a gel strength of at least 30 grams within 5 hours from preparation.
9. A food system comprising the modified sago starch of claim 1.

10. A sago starch having a viscosity of from about 400 Brabender Units (“BU”) to about 850 Brabender Units and having a gel strength at least 100% greater than a comparable cornstarch having a viscosity of from about 400 BU to about 1000 BU when both the sago starch and the cornstarch are evaluated for gel strength at a 6% solids content.
11. A process for preparing a cold water dispersible, modified sago starch having gelling properties, the process comprising the steps of:
  - converting a sago starch to a viscosity of about 400 Brabender Units (“BU”) to about 1000 BU;
  - inhibiting the sago starch such that the inhibited starch has a Brabender Viscosity Differential (“BVD”), measured between about 80° and about 90°C, of from about –35 BVD to about 25 BVD, measured at 7% solids; and
  - pregelatinizing the sago starch;
  - wherein the converted, inhibited, pregelatinized sago starch is capable of forming a gel having a gel strength of at least 30 grams within 5 hours from preparation.
12. The process of claim 11 wherein the sago starch is thermally inhibited.
13. The process of claim 11 further comprising the step of grinding the modified sago starch to a powder.
14. The process of claim 13 wherein the powder is ground so that at least about 85% of the starch passes through a 200-mesh screen.
15. The process of claim 11 wherein the sago starch is pregelatinized by drum drying the starch.
16. The process of claim 11 wherein the sago starch is inhibited by reacting the sago starch with at least 0.005% by weight of a crosslinking agent.
17. The process of claim 16 wherein the sago starch is reacted with at least about 0.015% by weight of a crosslinking agent.

18. The process of claim 17 wherein the sago starch is reacted with between about 0.015% and about 0.030% by weight of a crosslinking agent.
19. The process of claim 16 wherein the crosslinking agent is selected from the group consisting of phosphorus oxychloride, epichlorohydrin, sodium trimetaphosphate and adipic-acetic anhydride.
20. The process of claim 19 wherein the crosslinking agent is phosphorus oxychloride.
21. The process of claim 16 wherein the crosslinking reaction is further carried out at a temperature of about 5°C to about 60°C.
22. The process of claim 21 wherein the crosslinking reaction is further carried out at a temperature of about 20°C to about 45°C.
23. The process of claim 9 wherein the sago starch is converted with hydrogen peroxide.
24. The process of claim 9 further comprising the step of bleaching the sago starch.